



BLAZE OF GLORY

THE LAST RIDE
OF THE WESTERN HEROES



BOOK
FOUR

DIRECT EDITION

00411



\$2.99 US \$4.50 CAN

JOHN
OSTRANDER

LEONARDO
MANCO



MARVEL
COMICS

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OUR STORY THUS FAR...

In the mid 1880s, the town of **Wonderment, Montana** -- a peaceful mixture of freed blacks, whites, and Indians living together -- came under attack by hooded **Nightriders**. **Reno Jones** and a French-Canadian trapper, **Marcel Fournier**, left to recruit gunfighters to come help their cause. They returned with the **Rawhide Kid**, **Kid Colt**, **Two-Gun Kid**, and the **Outlaw Kid**. Meanwhile, the Nez Perce living nearby have summoned **Red Wolf** to aid the townspeople who have helped them. Kid Colt is pursued by the mysterious bounty hunter known only as **Gunhawk** and by the Pinkerton Agent, **Caleb Hammer**. Reno was shot and fell into a deep chasm while leading the others back to the besieged town. Hammer and the Gunhawk were captured by the Nightriders and pitted against each other in a duel, only to be saved by the sudden appearance of the mysterious figure of the **Ghost Rider**. Now they, too, are headed for Wonderment...



by JOHN OSTRANDER & LEONARDO MANCO

Bullpen - Letters Mariana Manco - Colors

Mark Bernardo with Tom Brevoort - Editors

Bob Harras - Editor in Chief

A Stan Lee Presentation



I KNOW. WE'RE BOTH AFTER KID COLT. THING IS--YOU'RE JUST AFTER THE BOUNTY. I GOT A FEDERAL WARRANT--AND IT'S PERSONAL FOR ME. HE SHOT DOWN FRIENDS OF MINE AFTER THEY PUT DOWN THEIR GUNS.



SENTRIES CAUGHT TWO GUYS RIDING
INTA TOWN AND ONE OF 'EM SAYS HE
HAS BUSINESS WITH YOU! SAYS HIS
NAME IS CALEB HAMMER!

HAMMER, I ALREADY PUT A HOLE IN
YOU! HOW MANY MORE I GOT T'PUT
BEFORE WE FINISH THIS?!

IT'S
OVER, COLT.
YOU'RE UNDER
ARREST.

I CAN
TAKE YOU DEAD
OR ALIVE. I GOT
A PREFERENCE.
HOW ABOUT
YOU?

RECONSIDER. WE GOT US A
SITUATION HERE. NEED COLT.
NO ONE'S GETTIN' OUT OF
TOWN 'TIL IT'S FINISHED
ANYWAY.

MISTER,
I AM MIGHTY TIRED
OF LOOKING DOWN THE
BARREL OF YOUR
GUN.

STILL, WE MET
YOUR PROBLEM OUTSIDE
OF TOWN. MAYBE WE SHOULD
JOIN FORCES UNTIL THIS IS
OVER— AND THEN COLT AND ME
CAN TEND TO OUR DIFFERENCES.

SOUNDS
'BOUT
RIGHT.

MIND
TELLIN' ME HOW
YOU ESCAPED
THOSE NIGHT-
RIDERS?

GUY
DRESSED ALL
IN WHITE SPOOKED
'EM, GAVE US A
CHANCE T'GET OUT.
SOMEBODY CALLED
HIM "GHOST
RIDER."

HUH.
THAT MAKES
THINGS A TAD
MORE INTERESTIN'.
IMPROVES THE
ODDS SOME,
TOO.

LISTEN,
HAMMER—IF
WE'RE NOT GOIN'
T'KILL EACH OTHER
RIGHT OFF, Y' MIGHT
AS WELL COME IN
AN' GET A DRINK
ON ME.



I ONLY
DRINK WITH
FRIENDS, AND
BECAUSE OF YOU,
COLT, I GOT FEWER
OF THOSE. SO, NO
SIR, I WILL NOT
DRINK WITH
YOU.



WHY
YOU--!



EASE
UP.



WHAT I
SAID TO HIM GOES
FOR YOU AS WELL. WE
CAN USE HIS GUN
RIGHT NOW. SETTLE
WITH HIM LATER--
IF THERE IS A
LATER.

YOU
SHOOT THAT
MAN IN THE BACK,
YOU'LL FACE
ME UP FRONT.
CLEAR?



Anaconda.



GHOST
RIDER?!

THAT SPOOK
ALWAYS MESSED UP
MY PLANS! AND YOU SAY
HE'S NOW OVER IN
WONDERMENT?



THAT'S
WHAT I WAS
SENT T'TELL YA,
MR. RILEY,
SIR!

DAMN!
I'M ABOUT
TRAPPED OUT
AS IT IS!



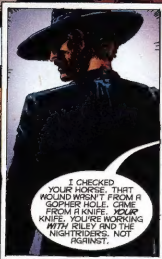
"NO! I WON'T LET THAT
SPOOK GET THE BETTER
OF ME AGAIN! PASS THE
WORD! BY DAWN, I WANT
EVERY GUN NEARBY THAT
CAN RIDE! WONDERMENT
WILL BE MINE IF I HAVE
T'KILL EVERYBODY IN IT!"

The next morning,
just out back of
Wonderment...





I GOT SUSPICIOUS, FOURNIER, AFTER THAT "SECRET PHSS" NEARLY GOT US ALL KILLED. AND HOW YOU CAME INTO TOWN TOO LATE FOR THE FIGHT.



I CHECKED YOUR HORSE. THAT WOUND WASN'T FROM A GOPHER HOLE. CAME FROM A KNIFE. YOUR KNIFE. YOU'RE WORKING WITH RILEY AND THE NIGHTRIDERS. NOT AGAINST.



YOU WILL KEEP YOUR HANDS CLEAR, EH? OR DE BOY, HE IS DEAD.



ME AND CASS, WE WILL RIDE OUT OF TOWN. WHEN I AM SAFE, I SEND DE BOY BACK.



MARCEL, WHAT IS THIS? WE'RE FRIENDS! YOU GOT ME INTO THIS!



YOU WERE RETIRED! I EXPECTED YOU TO REFUSE!



YOU PLAYED IT WRONG, RMIGO.



BLAM!





LEAVE HIM BE, COLT. MAN JUST KILLED WHAT HE THOUGHT WAS A FRIEND, TURNED OUT TO BE NO FRIEND AT ALL.



FOURNIER WAS THEIR SPY. THEY'LL KNOW OUR PLANS. WITH FOURNIER DEAD, THEY'LL BE COMING SOON. BEST MAKE READY.



Up in the mountains...

RILEY'LL BE HERE BY MIDNIGHT. HE'S GOT A HUNDRED MEN.



THEN TONIGHT WE FINISH IT.



WE BURN EVERY BUILDING AND KILL EVERY MAN, WOMAN, AND CHILD. THERE'S NO SUNRISE FOR WONDERMENT!



The hills outside of town...

I WANT T' THANK FLAMING STAR AND GHOST WIND RIDER HERE FOR SETTING UP THIS MEET WITH YOU AND THE OTHERS, RED WOLF.

FACT IS, WE FIGURE THE NIGHTRIDERS T' MAKE THEIR ATTACK TONIGHT. FACT IS, WE COULD USE SOME HELP. YOUR PEOPLE ARE SOME OF THE FINEST LIGHT CAVALRY IN THE WORLD. WE'RE ASKIN' THE HELP OF THE TRIBES.



AND WHAT DO THE TRIBES GET OUT OF THIS?



THE CHANCE TO KILL SOME WHITE MEN WITHOUT THE CAVALRY JUMPIN' ON YOUR BACKS.



I LIKE THAT. I WILL TALK WITH THE TRIBES.

As the sun goes down, the heroes gather to check their guns and prepare for the battle that's coming.

KEEPIN' CLOSE, EH, HAMMER? WANT T'MAKE SURE NOBODY KILLS ME BUT YOU?

DEAD OR ALIVE, YOU'RE MINE, JOHNNY COLT!

PENNY FOR 'EM, TWO-GUN.

OUR WAY'S OVER, JOHN. NEW VILLAINS NEED A NEW BREED OF HERO.

THEY'LL COME. I'VE SEEN 'EM. ME—I'M JUST LOOKING TO GO OUT IN A BLAZE OF GLORY.

FORGIVE ME, FATHER! FORGIVE WHAT I'VE BECOME... AND WHAT I MUST DO!

TONIGHT, THE OUTLAW KID RIDES ONCE MORE TIME.

TOWN'S DEAD AHEAD, MR. RILEY.

KILL THEM! KILL THEM ALL!

BULLPEN BULLETINS

AVAILABLE FEBRUARY 2ND

FANTASTIC FOUR

Which planet will Dr. Doom save: Earth or Planet Doom? The generals (and their vast armies) finally make their move on Earth! Dr. Doom can control them, but which planet will he spare... the one he lives on now or the one that he could rule? By CHRIS CLAREMONT and SALVADOR LARROCA!

#28

MARVEL SELECTS: FANTASTIC FOUR

Relive the magic or introduce a new reader to the Marvel Universe with the 12-issue series that reprints the classic moments in the life of the Fantastic Four! This installment reprints FANTASTIC FOUR (Vol. 1) #110, in which Mr. Fantastic battles Annihilus in the Negative Zone and the Thing quips the FF! By STAN LEE and JOHN BUSCEMA!

#4 of 12

MUTANT X

Ever since the defeat of the Goblin Queen, anti-mutant sentiment has grown to dangerous levels on the MUTANT X world. In the midst of this boiling hatred, Havok finds himself needing to rescue an enemy when a member of an anti-mutant youth group discovers that he himself is a mutant. But Alex Summers isn't the only one who has tracked down the boy... because he's also in the crosshairs of the Punisher! By HOWARD MACKIE and CARY NORD!

#18

SPIDER-WOMAN

It's the return of the rip-snortin' Rhino! One of Spider-Man's toughest foes is back to menace Mattie! But just when it seems that Spider-Woman has a handle on the situation, it grows into a threat that could destroy the entire world! By JOHN BYRNE and BART SEARS!

#10

THOR

Thanos continues his march through the cosmos! The mad Titan has the Chalice of Ruins... and now the Illumination Stone is within his reach! Meanwhile, Thor can't stop him because he's locked in combat with the untold might of Mungo! Will Balder the Brave's quest lead to the Thunder God's salvation? By DAN JURGENS and JOHN ROMITA JR.!

#22

UNCANNY X-MEN

In the wake of the numerous X-Men crises of recent times, the High Evolutionary decides that mutantkind poses a terrible threat to the future and evolution of man. Can he really take away the power of mutants? Who is his mysterious ally? And while this may be a horrible blow to the Children of the Atom... is it for the betterment of all? By ALAN DAVIS and ADAM KUBERT!

#379

X-MEN: HELLFIRE CLUB

What terrible choices must a young Sebastian Shaw make to become the Black King of the Hellfire Club Inner Circle. For the first time, witness the recruitment of the powerful Harry Leland, the cyborg Donald Pierce and the ruthless Emma Frost! How did they come together, and what unholy bargain keeps them together? By BEN RAAB and CHARLIE ADLARD!

#4

X-MEN: THE HIDDEN YEARS

The team finds themselves caught in the torrential storms that surround the Savage Land! And to make matters worse, their makeshift hot-air balloon is beginning to break apart! By JOHN BYRNE!

#5

H.I. Heroes!

We can't waste a minute because our latest No-Prize Laureate has a burning vocabulary question which must be answered as soon as possible in our ongoing effort to wipe out literacy! So this is for you, Sahib Haque of Evansville, IN...

"I've been reading the Fantastic Four for years but there's one 'thing' I never figured out. What is a 'mook'? Ben Grimm is real fond of that word."

All of Marveldom is fond of the word, and no wonder, Shahid. It's sort-of a cross between a "wutz" and a "shlub." There! Glad I was able to set you straight!

Wow! I thought I knew everything until I got this letter from Mike Hingston of N. Vancouver, Canada. I decided I had to share this bit of unexpected info with the riotous ranks of Marveldom Assembled, as well as those still culturally deprived...

"Here's something I bet you didn't know. (You're right, Mike!) In the game 'Ken Griffey Jr. Presents Major League Baseball' the Houston Astros line-up of names are those of many Marvel legends like Steve Ditko, Jack Kirby and you, Stan! And the Milwaukee Brewers line-up includes P. Parker, B. Banner, M. Murdock, B. Grimm and N. Fury along with some DC'ers like C. Kent and B. Wayne! I think this hidden salute to comics is great! What do you think?"

I'm with ya, Mike. It proves the outside world is finally giving the superhero world the recognition it deserves. But how did those extra two unknowns get in there?

Here's one I never thought of. Ariel C. Barbe of Chubut, Argentina wants to ask...

"Why are The Avengers called The Avengers? What are they avenging?"

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STAN'S SOAPBOX

Since everyone knows I'm the soul of honesty, I'll give you the straight scoop: I don't know! It just seemed like a real sketchy title way back in the '60s when I thought it up. But worry thee not, Believer, I'll show your cogent query to the genial geniuses in the Bullpen and you can bet they'll dream up a brilliant response.

Here's another one that never occurred to me. George Lerma of Astoria, NY asks...

"Which came first, the superhero or the supervillain? 'Nuff said!"

Tell you what, Georgie, I'll take a wild guess and say the superhero. But then, all of us writers realized our heroes needed someone to fight, so voila -- the supervillain! (I like this kind of question 'cause even if I'm wrong, who can prove it?)

Finally, from far-off Willemstad, Netherlands Antilles, Sherlon Martis, who seems to have a great and glowing affinity for adjectives, is bustin' to find out...

"How come you've never made a comicbook featuring The Incredible Super Fantastic Uncanny Stan Lee?"

Surely the answer is obvious, Sherl. You see, all of our heroes are real, believable characters -- while I'm merely a simple, humble, modest work of fiction! Forgive me for that one, Bunkey, it's been a long, hard day -- but never too hard for me to say "Wherever you go, whatever you do, be sure to read Marvel -- or I'll tell on you!"

Excelsior!

Stan's Soapbox, Marvel Comics, 357 Park Ave S, NY, NY 10016
stan@stanlee.com

Stan Lee

BULLPEN BITS #38

WOW, COLOSSUS! I NEVER KNEW YOU WERE AN ARTIST! THESE DRAWINGS ARE COOL! THESE CARTOONS ARE FUNNY!



I BET THE GIRLS LOVE YOU! THEY REALLY GO FOR THE ARTISTIC TYPES! DON'T THEY?



WELL, COMRADE HAWKEYE... PERHAPS. BUT WHEN THE GIRLS REALIZE I PREFER TO DRAW SILLY CARTOONS RATHER THAN PAINT PRETTY LANDSCAPES...



BY CHRIS GIARRUSSO

... WELL, LET'S JUST SAY I HAVE PLENTY OF TIME FOR DRAWING SILLY CARTOONS.



The gates of hell split wide open as lightning seems to lash the horses into a frenzy! Surely the cry coming from all these lips cannot be human!

These are **soulless** men, and it is not only the money that has drawn them here - it is a **blood lust** that seeks satiation and the belief they can create carnage without retribution!





The gates of hell split wide open as lightning seems to lash the horses into a frenzy! Surely the cry coming from all these lips cannot be human!

These are **soulless** men, and it is not only the money that has drawn them here-- it is a **blood lust** that seeks satiation and the belief they can create carnage without retribution!

BLAM



They are
wrong

Justice--and
vengeance--
comes slashing
in one side...

and then like
hammer blows
from another
direction, cool
hands direct
hot lead, and
where their guns
speak, men die!

Then one
man rides a
wagon full of
flame straight
into the teeth
of the riders
from hell!

POW

BIAM

POW

BIAM

POW

KA-BLAM

HIYAAAH!

NEEEIGHHH!

ROUUMMMBLEE



THERE'S
MORE HERE THAN
WE FIGURED ON,
RAWHIDE!



I KNOW IT! GO TO GROUND!
HARDER TARGETS TO HIT THAT
WAY! GIVE THE TOWNSFOLK
TIME TO GET CLEAR!

One man has no
thoughts to get clear



C'MON,
YOU OWL-HOOT!
C'MON! YOU WANT
A PIECE OF ME?
C'MON!!!

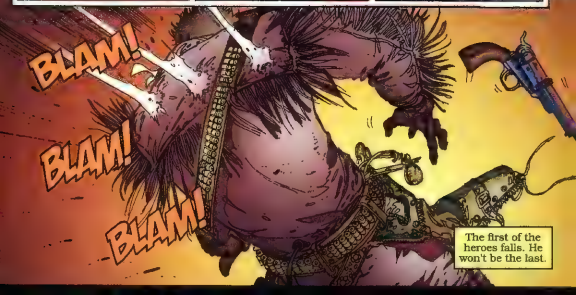
I MAY BE
BOUND FOR
HELL BUT I'M
TAKING YOU
WITH ME!



The blazing cart slams
into the vanguard of
the attacking horsemen
and stops them dead
in their tracks!



And out of the inferno
the Outlaw Kid comes
up blazing!



The first of the
heroes falls. He
won't be the last.







YOU NOW
STAND REVEALED AS
THE AUTHOR OF THE
EVILS BEGETTING THIS
TOWN, AND NOW YOU
WILL PAY!



THUS
SWEARS...
THE GHOST
RIDER!

Riley opens his mouth--
to curse? To scream? No
sound comes out, nor can
he make his limbs move!
The nightmare he has
had these past few years
is now galloping hard
down upon him, raising
the buffalo rifle it carries!



KABLAM!



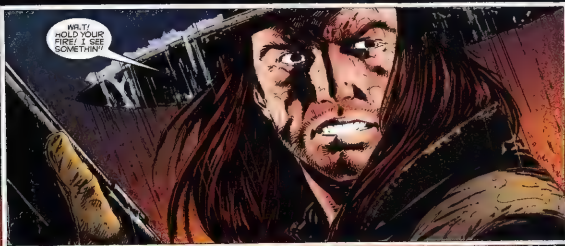
PLOW!

YOU
MAY'VE KILLED
RILEY, SPOOK, BUT
I'M TAKING YOU
OUT!



UHN!

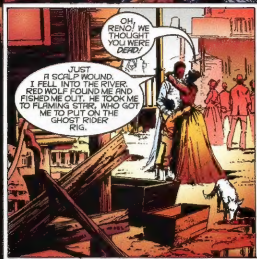
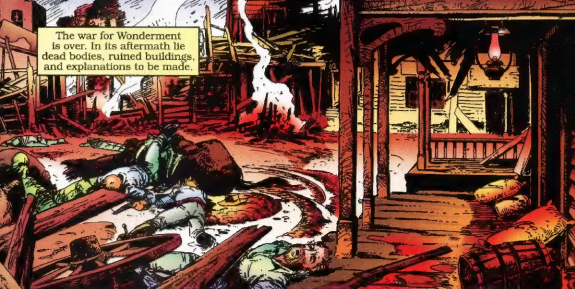








The war for Wonderment is over. In its aftermath lie dead bodies, ruined buildings, and explanations to be made.



OH, RENO! WE THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD!

JUST A SCALP WOUND. I FELL INTO THE RIVER. RED WOLF FOUND ME AND FISHED ME OUT. HE TOOK ME TO FLAMING STAR, WHO GOT ME TO PUT ON THE GHOST RIDER RIG.



SEEMS THE OLD INDIAN IS CARETAKER OF THE OUTFIT.

YOU GONNA KEEP IT, PA?

GHOST RIDER DIED TODAY. LET HIM LIE IN PEACE. LET ME LIVE THE SAME WAY.



WELL, PARD, YOU CHEATED DEATH FOR AWHILE BUT LOOKS LIKE IT'S CAUGHT UP WITH YOU AT LAST.



MY TIME WILL COME.



VRYA CON DIOS, MI HERMANO, YOU WERE ONE OF THE GOOD ONES.



YOU HAVE WON A REAL VICTORY, RED WOLF. MAYBE THE LAST OUR PEOPLE WILL KNOW FOR AWHILE. WHAT WILL YOU DO NOW?



ENJOY WHAT I HAVE. FIND A NEW ROAD--A LITTLE PEACE, WITH YOU.

YES. WITH ME.



YOU AND MR. HAMMER CAN STAY, Y'KNOW. YOU EARNED THAT. WE'D LIKE TO HAVE YOU.

THANKS, BUT YOU HAVE A TOWN TO BUILD AND THAT'S NOT WHAT I DO. OUR PATHS LEAD OTHER WAYS. ADIOS.



WAS IT WORTH IT?

WAS WHAT WORTH WHAT?

THIS FIGHT. YOU BURIED THREE FRIENDS BACK THERE. ALONG THE WAY, I BURIED SOME OF MY OWN AND WOUND UP AVENGING THE MAN THAT KILLED THEM. HALF THE TOWN DIED. WAS IT WORTH IT?

MEN DIE. EVERY SINGLE ONE OF US. THAT'S A FACT AND THAT'S OUR FATE.

"Only the legends are forever."



THE END